

Board Policy Statement: Warning Labels on Prescription Labels for Oral Chemotherapy Medications

Adopted January 30, 2019

The California State Board of Pharmacy recognizes that oral chemotherapy treatment is increasingly common among cancer patients and health care providers. However, these medications pose serious risks to humans and the environment if improperly handled or disposed of. Many patients, caregivers and even health care providers may not recognize these drugs or be aware of their hazardous nature.

The board supports voluntary efforts by pharmacies and clinics to improve awareness and education about oral chemotherapy medications. In addition, the board encourages pharmacists to provide specific counseling to patients and their caregivers on proper handling and disposal of OC medications.

To help patients, caregivers and health care providers recognize these medications as hazardous, the board encourages pharmacies to affix a standardized “hazardous drug” symbol to prescription labels when appropriate. The addition of the symbol would serve as an important reminder to patients and caregivers about the proper handling and disposal of the drugs.

The following represents an appropriate warning symbol:

